

VII. CLAIMS

[0220] We claim:

[0221] 1. A method to audit, comply and maintain on-going compliance at one or more specified commercial or retail facilities, with all applicable U.S. regulatory requirements promulgated by one or more state or federal regulatory agencies, capable of being predetermined from published state or federal codes of regulations, via the WWW, comprising:

[0222] means for identifying regulatory agency(ies) regulating the minor facility based upon information provided by a facility employee or contractor;

[0223] means for accessing appropriate state and federal government WWW web sites and databases containing state and federal regulations;

[0224] means for identifying specific regulations and regulatory requirements applicable to different minor facilities;

[0225] means for organizing applicable regulatory requirements into separate electronic checklist documents, (which might sometimes be referred to as C-Records") each addressing one or more primary regulatory requirements, and each of which may be completed by a single employee or contractor;

[0226] means for formatting electronic checklist documents to include one or more detailed requirements, specific to each primary requirement each of which detailed requirements must be complied with, in order for a minor facility to be in compliance with a primary requirement;

[0227] means for incorporating an electronic link within each electronic checklist document providing access to additional information needed to help a employee

or contractor to better understand the primary and detailed regulatory requirements addressed by each electronic checklist document;

[0228] means for incorporating an electronic link within each electronic checklist document providing access to a copy of the text of regulatory requirements addressed by each electronic checklist document;

[0229] means for incorporating an electronic link within each electronic checklist document providing access to a quiz or a test on the regulatory requirements addressed in each electronic checklist document;

[0230] means for revising facility profiles to reflect changes in the construction and/or operation of the minor facility resulting in new compliance requirements

[0231] and means for automatically electronically notifying all responsible employees or contractors to confirm compliance with new requirements.

[0232] means for creating a single document for each employee and contractor position (that might sometimes be referred to as an "Audit Clipboard") which may contain links to all electronic checklist documents to be completed by the individual working at the position;

[0233] means for creating a single document for each employee and contractor position (that might sometimes be referred to as an "Compliance Clipboard") which may contain links to all electronic checklist documents to be completed by the individual working at the position;

[0234] means for prompting a minor facility employee or contractor to identify a specified facility type;

[0235] means for prompting a minor facility employee or contractor to identify the city, town, county (or parish) and state in which the facility operates;

[0236] means for prompting a minor facility employee or contractor to complete an electronic checklist providing more detailed information on entity operations as needed to identify all specific regulated activities undertaken by the minor facility;

[0237] means for storing electronic checklist documents within a facility database residing on a server maintained by a service provider;

[0238] means for prompting a minor facility employee or contractor to assign audit and compliance responsibilities to various employees or contractors, and direct employees and contractors to audit, comply and confirm compliance by completing assigned electronic checklist documents;

[0239] means for prompting various responsible employees and contractors at a minor facility to access assigned electronic checklist documents, and read additional information about regulatory requirements linked to each electronic checklist document;

[0240] means for prompting various responsible employees and contractors at a facility to access assigned electronic checklist documents, and view the actual text of regulatory requirements linked to each electronic checklist document;

[0241] means for prompting various responsible employees and contractors at a facility to access electronic checklist documents, and take a test to confirm understanding of regulatory requirements linked to each electronic checklist document;

[0242] means for scoring, storing and displaying test results;

[0243] means for requiring a minor facility employee or contractor to receive a pre-established test score before being permitted to complete and submit an electronic checklist document;

[0244] means for prompting employees and contractors to audit facility compliance with primary requirements and detailed requirements by accessing and checking appropriate locations in each assigned electronic checklist document;

[0245] means for identifying employees and contractors that have timely completed and submitted all electronic checklist audit documents;

[0246] means for identifying employees and contractors that have failed to timely complete and submit one or more electronic checklist audit documents;

[0247] means for identifying employees and contractors failing to confirm compliance with one or more primary requirements when submitting an electronic checklist audit document;

[0248] means for storing and displaying minor facility audit results;

[0249] means for allowing an authorized employee or contractor to view minor facility audit results via an intranet or the WWW;

[0250] means for prompting employees and contractors at each minor facility to access, and confirm on-going facility compliance with primary requirements and detailed requirements by checking appropriate places in each assigned electronic checklist document and submit same to the minor facility database;

[0251] means for identifying employees and contractors that have timely completed and submitted all electronic checklist on-going compliance documents;

[0252] means for identifying employees and contractors that have failed to timely complete and submit one or more electronic checklist compliance documents;

[0253] means for identifying employees and contractors failing to confirm compliance with one or more primary requirements when submitting an electronic checklist compliance document;

[0254] means for storing and displaying facility compliance results;

[0255] means for allowing an authorized individual to view facility employee, contractor or facility compliance status and results via the WWW.

[0256] 2. The method of claim 1 where the specified facility type is selected from a list, comprising: automobile dealerships; heating, ventilating and air conditioning contractors; chiropractor, physician and dental offices; hospitals; motor vehicle paint and body shops; motor vehicle air conditioning shops; motor vehicle tire shops; dry cleaners; nursing homes; passenger airports; cargo airports; private airports; animal hospitals; banks; funeral homes; motorcycle dealers; recreational vehicle dealers; painting contractors; pest control contractors; gasoline stations; convenience stores; private and municipal motor vehicle repair and maintenance shops; radiator repair shops; brake repair shops, muffler and exhaust shops; oil and motor vehicle oil and lubrication shops; motor vehicle windshield repair shops; restaurants; fast food establishments; hotels; motels; private and local, state and federal office buildings; private and municipal drinking water treatment plants, private and municipal wastewater treatment plants.

[0257] 3. The method of claim 1 wherein the regulatory requirements applicable to the minor facility derive from regulations promulgated by a federal regulatory agency and published in the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations.

[0258] 4. The method of claim 1 wherein the regulatory requirements applicable to a minor facility derive from regulations promulgated by a state regulatory agency and published in an appropriate state administrative code.

[0259] 5. The method of claim 1 wherein the individual authorized to view the employee, contractor, and/or facility compliance status is a manager, director or officer of the facility.

[0260] 6. The method of claim 1 wherein the individual authorized to view the employee, contractor, and/or facility compliance status is an attorney and/or law firm, retained by the facility to provide legal advice concerning compliance.

[0261] 7. The method of claim 1 wherein the individual authorized to view the employee, contractor, and/or facility compliance status is a regulatory agency charged with responsibility for regulating the facility.

[0262] 8. The method of claim 1 wherein the individual authorized to view the employee, contractor, and/or facility compliance status is a bank or an insurance company or an insurance broker contemplating issuance of an insurance policy to the owners and/or operators of the facility.

[0263] 9. A method to audit, comply and maintain on-going compliance at one or more specified facilities with all applicable U.S. regulatory agency reporting requirements promulgated by one or more state or federal regulatory agencies, capable of being predetermined from published state or federal codes of regulations, via the WWW, comprising:

[0264] means for identifying regulatory agency(ies) regulating the facilities, based upon information provided by a facility employee or contractor;

[0265] means for accessing appropriate state and federal government WWW web sites and databases containing state and federal regulations;

[0266] means for identifying specific regulations and regulatory reporting requirements applicable to facilities;

[0267] means for organizing regulatory reporting requirements into separate electronic checklist documents, (which might sometimes be referred to as C-Records”) each addressing one or more primary regulatory requirements, and each of which may be completed by a single employee or contractor;

[0268] means for incorporating an electronic link within each electronic checklist document providing access to additional information needed to help a employee or contractor to better understand reporting requirements addressed by each electronic checklist document;

[0269] means for incorporating an electronic link within each electronic checklist document providing access to a copy of the text of regulatory requirements addressed by each electronic checklist document;

[0270] means for incorporating an electronic link within each electronic checklist document providing access to a quiz or a test on the regulatory requirements addressed in each electronic checklist document;

[0271] means for revising facility profiles to reflect changes in the construction and/or operation of the major facility resulting in new compliance requirements

[0272] and means for automatically electronically notifying all responsible employees or contractors to confirm compliance with new requirements.

[0273] means for creating a single document for each employee and contractor position (that might sometimes be referred to as an “Audit Clipboard”) which may contain links to all electronic checklist documents to be completed by the individual working at the position;

[0274] means for creating a single document for each employee and contractor position (that might sometimes be referred to as an “Compliance Clipboard”) which may contain links to all electronic checklist documents to be completed by the individual working at the position;

[0275] means for prompting a major facility employee or contractor to identify a specified facility type;

[0276] means for prompting a minor facility employee or contractor to identify the city, town, county (or parish) and state in which the facility operates;

[0277] means for prompting a minor facility employee or contractor to complete an electronic checklist providing more detailed information on entity operations as needed to identify all reporting requirements applicable to the facility;

[0278] means for storing electronic checklist documents within a facility database residing on a server maintained by a service provider;

[0279] means for prompting a facility employee or contractor to assign audit and compliance responsibilities to various employees or contractors, and direct employees and contractors to audit, comply and confirm compliance by completing assigned electronic checklist documents;

[0280] means for prompting various responsible employees and contractors at a minor facility to access assigned electronic checklist documents, and read additional information about regulatory reporting requirements linked to each electronic checklist document;

[0281] means for prompting various responsible employees and contractors at a facility to access assigned electronic checklist documents, and view the actual text of regulatory requirements linked to each electronic checklist document;

[0282] means for prompting various responsible employees and contractors at a facility to access electronic checklist documents, and take a test to confirm understanding of regulatory reporting requirements linked to each electronic checklist document;

[0283] means for scoring, storing and displaying test results;

[0284] means for requiring a minor facility employee or contractor to receive a pre-established test score before being permitted to complete and submit an electronic checklist document;

[0285] means for prompting employees and contractors to audit facility compliance with reporting requirements by accessing and checking appropriate locations in each assigned electronic checklist document;

[0286] means for identifying employees and contractors that have timely completed and submitted all electronic checklist audit documents;

[0287] means for identifying employees and contractors that have failed to timely complete and submit one or more electronic checklist audit documents;

[0288] means for identifying employees and contractors failing to confirm compliance with one or more reporting requirements when submitting an electronic checklist audit document;

[0289] means for storing and displaying minor facility audit results;

[0290] means for allowing an authorized employee or contractor to view major facility audit results via an intranet or the WWW;

[0291] means for prompting employees and contractors at each facility to access, and confirm on-going facility compliance with reporting requirements by checking appropriate places in each assigned electronic checklist document and submit same to the minor facility database;

[0292] means for identifying employees and contractors that have timely completed and submitted all electronic checklist on-going compliance documents;

[0293] means for identifying employees and contractors that have failed to timely complete and submit one or more electronic checklist compliance documents;

[0294] means for identifying employees and contractors failing to confirm compliance with one or more reporting requirements when submitting an electronic checklist compliance document;

[0295] means for storing and displaying facility compliance results;

[0296] means for allowing an authorized individual to view facility employee, contractor or facility compliance status and results via the WWW.

[0297] 10. The method of claim 9 where the facility type is selected from a Standard Industry Classification ("SIC") list published by the United states Government or any alternate list subsequently intended to substitute for any such SIC list in the future.

[0298] 11. The method of claim 9 wherein the regulatory requirements applicable to the facility derive from regulations promulgated by a federal regulatory agency and published in the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations.

[0299] 12. The method of claim 9 wherein the regulatory requirements applicable to the facility derive from regulations promulgated by a state regulatory agency and published in an appropriate state administrative code.

[0300] 13. The method of claim 9 wherein the individual authorized to view the employee, contractor, and/or facility compliance status is a manager, director or officer of the facility.

[0301] 14. The method of claim 9 wherein the individual authorized to view the employee, contractor, and/or facility compliance status is an attorney and/or law firm, retained by the facility to provide legal advice concerning compliance.

[0302] 15. The method of claim 9 wherein the individual authorized to view the employee, contractor, and/or facility compliance status is a regulatory agency charged with responsibility for regulating the facility.

[0303] 16. The method of claim 9 wherein the individual authorized to view the employee, contractor, and/or facility compliance status is a bank or an insurance company or an insurance broker contemplating issuance of an insurance policy to the owners and/or operators of the facility.

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